



# Falmouth Toilet Community Consultation



Version: 1 – Date: April 2025

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## Introduction

Council needs to replace the toilet block located at the Grant Street Lagoon, Falmouth as it is no longer fit for purpose.

In determining a new location for the toilet block, Council wanted to consult with the Falmouth community. To do this, we developed plans for three potential locations and developed a survey as well as held a community meeting to discuss these options and hear community feedback.

**The survey was open from 22 January 2025 and closed on 1 April 2025.**

The online survey returned 94 responses

**The community consultation meeting was held at the Falmouth Community Centre on 19 February from 5:30 – 7pm.**

Around 35 people attended the community meeting.

The survey was promoted in the following ways;

- Council's Facebook page
- Council's website
- Council's newsletter
- Posters with QR code link placed at the location
- Falmouth Email database

## Aims of Consultation

1. To understand the Falmouth community's preference on a toilet block location
2. To receive any other feedback from community related to the project

## Key Findings

The survey was predominately answered by members of the Falmouth community. This shows that our promotion of the survey reached the right target audience.

Based on the responses in the online survey, the Grant Street location is preferred followed by the Reserve location with the Community Centre location was the least favoured.

- The Grant Street Location – either on the current site or at the Location provided is the preferred location.
- Community does not want to see any vegetation unnecessarily removed, particularly the removal of the flowering gums for location 1 – Falmouth Reserve.
- The community would like Council to seriously consider any environmental impacts of the project

## Questions 1 and 2: Name

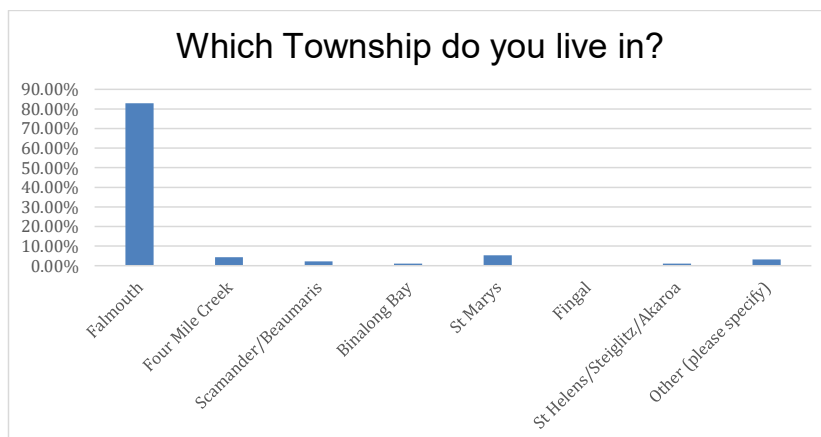
This question recorded the respondents first and last names. This question could be skipped if respondents wanted to remain anonymous.

This question was answered by 73 people and skipped by 21.

## Question 3. Which township do you live in?

This question was included so that we could make sure the Falmouth community was the main township represented in the survey data. As the project is located in this community, it was important to Council that their thoughts and voices were heard. We do acknowledge that this area is visited by community members of other townships as well as visitors and we appreciate all feedback received.

As shown below, more than 80%, or 78 of respondents were from the Falmouth community.



Three respondents selected Other, one was from Cornwall, one lives on the mainland but has property in Falmouth and the other, identified as a regular visitor.

## Conclusions:

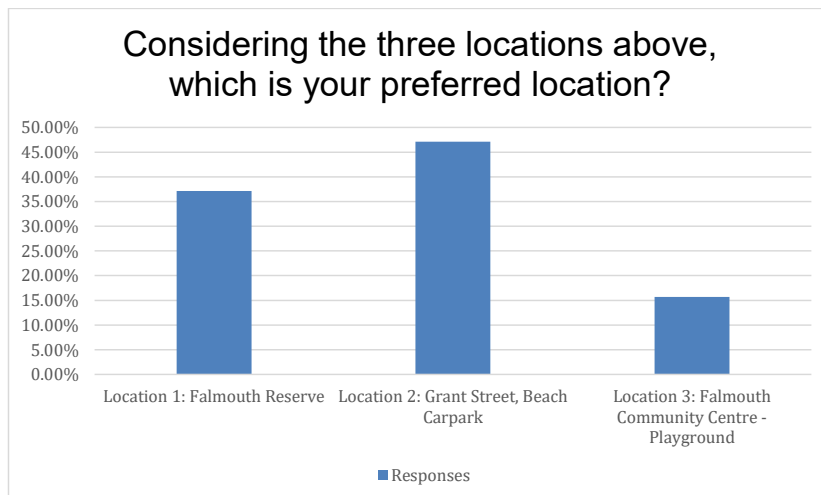
The survey was predominately answered by members of the Falmouth community. This shows that our promotion of the survey reached the right target audience.

#### Question 4. Considering the three locations, which is your preferred

The aim of this question was to get a definitive preferred location from community members to assist us in the selection of a site.

70 respondents answered this question and 24 skipped the question.

47%, or 33 respondents preferred the Grant Street carpark location which was closely followed by 37% or 26 respondents who preferred the Reserve location. Only 15% or 11 respondents preferred the location near the community Centre.



#### Conclusions

Based on the responses in the online survey to this question, the Grant Street location is preferred followed by the Reserve location with the Community Centre location was the least favoured.

## Question 5. Why do you think this location is the most suitable?

Using the preference respondents gave in Question 4 we broke all comments into the three locations and then collated them looking for what community considered to be the benefits and the concerns of potential areas.

The following is a summary of responses related to each location:

### Grant Street Carpark:

#### Benefits:

- **Proximity to Main Use Area:**
  - Closest to the lagoon and surf beach, which are the primary attractions for both locals and visitors.
  - Serves the highest volume of users, especially during summer.
- **Accessibility and Convenience:**
  - Located near the established car park, allowing easy access for families, elderly visitors, and early morning beachgoers (e.g. surfers).
  - Does not require the creation of new parking or significant changes to traffic patterns.
- **Practicality and Familiarity:**
  - Site is already known and used as a toilet location, making it a logical and expected choice for visitors.
  - Placing the toilet elsewhere risks it being underused or bypassed, leading to unsanitary conditions (e.g. people using bushes).
- **Minimal Community Impact:**
  - Avoids visual intrusion into residential areas.
  - No need for tree removal or development in more sensitive zones.
- **Public Support:**
  - Strong community sentiment that relocating the facility would reduce usage and create health issues.
  - Seen as the most logical, widely beneficial, and least disruptive option.

#### Concerns:

- **Visual Impact from Roadway:**
  - Some concern about visibility from the main drive-in, but overall, current placement is seen as visually acceptable.
- **Assumption of Council Preference:**
  - A few comments suggest a perception that Council may not prefer this site.

## Falmouth Reserve Location

### Benefits:

- **Practicality and Accessibility:**
  - Located on flat ground with existing off-road parking suitable for cars, camper trailers, and caravans.
  - Easily visible and accessible from the main road, making it convenient for first-time visitors and day users.
- **Proximity to Key Facilities:**
  - Close to recreation areas like the oval, bike track, and within walking distance of the beach via a footpath.
  - Seen as a central and practical location that could encourage broader use of public spaces.
- **Low Impact on Residents and Environment:**
  - Not directly adjacent to homes, reducing potential for noise or amenity issues.
  - Offers natural screening to reduce visual impact.
  - Located away from the lagoon, avoiding concerns about pollution risk or ecological sensitivity.
- **Infrastructure Readiness:**
  - Close to power and water connections, making site servicing simpler and potentially more cost-effective.
  - Requires less earthworks and development compared to other options.
- **Community Support for Future Growth:**
  - Seen as a logical option for growing use of recreational assets.
  - Recognised as a balanced solution for residents, Airbnb guests, and visitors alike.

### Concerns:

- **Less Beach-Oriented:**
  - While walking distance to the beach, some felt it is not as close as the lagoon site, which could reduce immediate use by beachgoers.
- **Additional Suggestions:**
  - One respondent noted that a site near the fire station was originally suggested but not formally proposed, indicating a possible missed consideration.
- **Dual-Site Consideration:**
  - A few comments suggest multiple facilities may be beneficial, especially to cater to both recreational and beach users more directly.

## Community Centre

### Benefits:

- **Environmental Considerations:**
  - Minimal impact on waterways (e.g. lagoon) compared to other sites, reducing risk of pollution or runoff.
  - Some comments noted this option may require less vegetation clearing than others, or that surrounding vegetation is already degraded and could be rehabilitated post-construction.
- **Infrastructure and Efficiency:**
  - Opinions that there was no need for a holding tank at this location, which may reduce odours, ongoing maintenance, and operating costs.
  - Services already nearby, allowing toilets to be clustered with other community assets, creating efficiencies.
- **Proximity to Community Facilities:**
  - Close to the playground, tennis courts, and community centre, where children and families frequently gather.
  - Campervan parking and sufficient space are available, offering good access for varied user groups.
- **General Practicality:**
  - Seen as serving the local community well, especially those using the recreational grounds rather than the beach.

### Concerns:

- **Distance from Main Attraction:**
  - Viewed by many as too far from the beach and lagoon, which are the primary drawcards for most visitors.
  - Concern that people will avoid using the facility if it is too far, leading to unsanitary alternatives (e.g. bushes).
- **Environmental Impact Still Present:**
  - Some concerns about the need to remove large, established trees during construction, despite lesser impact compared to other options.
  - A few responses indicated none of the proposed locations are ideal, with preference for rebuilding on the existing site or exploring alternative, previously suggested locations (e.g. behind the fire station).
- **Perceived Forced Choice:**
  - Perception from the community is being asked to choose from limited or suboptimal options, with some feeling this site is simply the “least bad” rather than a good solution.

### Conclusions:

**Option 2 (Beach Carpark)** received the strongest public support, primarily due to its proximity to the lagoon and beach, where most visitors go. However, environmental sensitivity and visibility concerns were noted.

## Question 6. Do you have any further feedback or comments regarding this location

This question builds on the response provided for question 5. We asked this to understand the reasons why the respondent selected this location as their preference.

This question was answered by 31 respondents and skipped by 63.

We went through all the comments looking for common themes and sentiments as well as any other additional feedback. This is what we found:

### Preference for Location 2 (Current Toilet / Beach Carpark)

- Most convenient for beach and lagoon users, especially tourists.
- Seen as the most practical and logical location for families and visitors.
- Reduces risk of people using the bush due to proximity to main activity area.
- Existing parking infrastructure already supports high usage.
- Preferred over other options despite some concerns about visual impact.

### Conditional Support for Location 1 (Reserve)

- Perceived as the most environmentally practical location with the least vegetation loss.
- Easiest to access for both residents and visitors entering Falmouth.
- Seen as a compromise option – not ideal for direct beach access but acceptable overall.
- Suggestions made to minimise structure footprint and visual impact, e.g., roof design, orientation, cladding.

### Lack of Support for Location 3 (Community Centre / Playground)

- Seen as too far from the beach and inconvenient for visitors.
- Likely to result in pollution if users don't find the toilet easily.
- Not a viable alternative for beachgoers; better suited for local use only.

### Environmental and Vegetation Concerns

- Strong desire to minimise vegetation removal, particularly mature or community-valued trees (e.g., flowering gums on the main road).
- If removal is necessary, requests for replacement planting and early commencement of revegetation plans.
- Suggestions that existing degraded or previously cleared sites (such as the current site) are more suitable.
- Environmental impact comparisons across locations requested.

### Traffic, Access & Urban Impact

- Support for options that reduce traffic through residential streets.
- Preference for locations with existing access and parking, to avoid overdevelopment.
- Warnings against creating a "blight on the landscape" or over-improving natural areas.



#### Design & Integration Suggestions

- Calls for a low-profile, non-intrusive building design.
- Suggestions for natural materials (e.g., timber or stone) to help the structure blend with the surroundings.
- Interest in creative and thoughtful design that respects the site's natural beauty.
- Recommendation for thoughtful orientation and minimisation of parking infrastructure beyond essential needs.

#### Alternative Site Suggestions or Broader Reflections

- Several questioned why a fourth site, such as near the fire station, was not explored.
- A few do not believe any of the three options are ideal, suggesting other existing disturbed or central areas would be more appropriate.
- Some comments express a general frustration with limited choices and seek further consultation or creative compromise.

#### Conclusions:

- The Grant Street Location – either on the current site or alternatively at the Falmouth Reserve as a second preference;
- Community does not want to see any vegetation unnecessarily removed, particularly the removal of the flowering gums for location 1 – Falmouth Reserve.
- The community would like Council to seriously consider any environmental impacts of the project

**Commented [J11]:** I reworded this as I don't think they wanted the toilet in the position as it was proposed.

## Question 7. Do you have any further feedback relating to this project that you would like us to consider?

### Strong Support for Upgrading the Existing Toilet Site

- Preference for retaining the current location or replacing the facility nearby (Grant Street).
- Concern that the vegetation cited for preservation is not significant, recent, or already degraded.
- Existing location is already disturbed, has infrastructure (power/water), and avoids new impacts elsewhere.
- Questions raised about why a “none of the above” or original site option wasn't included.

### Opposition to Falmouth Community Centre / Playground Location

- Concerns about increased traffic through residential streets and potential for overnight stays.
- Too close to homes, playground, and existing green corridor – perceived safety, privacy, and environmental impacts.
- Strong objections to the removal of significant, well-loved mature trees, especially flowering gums along the walking track.
- The area is described as a safe, family-friendly corridor used by children and walkers, and there are safety concerns about mixing vehicle access and play spaces.

### Concerns About Tree Removal and Environmental Impact

- Strong opposition to removing established trees, particularly the avenue of flowering gums near the FCC and Falmouth Reserve.
- Requests for vegetation removal impacts to be clearly documented and compared across all options.
- Recognition that some clearing is inevitable, but requests to balance this with thoughtful design and revegetation.

### Design Concerns and Requests

- Many view the current design as too large, too high, and visually intrusive – compared to what is needed or expected.
- Suggestions for a simple, low-profile structure with natural materials and appropriate landscaping.
- Multiple calls for design changes to reduce visual impact, remove excessive features and create a more discreet footprint.

### Functionality and Features

- Desire for a child- and family-friendly design: baby change table, child-sized toilet, accessible toilet.
- Questions around number of toilets needed, and whether one all-access toilet could meet most needs.
- Support for composting or low-impact solutions, and queries about why these weren't explored.

### Equity and Broader Use of Funds

- Some comments questioned whether it's appropriate to spend so much on one toilet location when other areas, like Four Mile Creek, are also in need.
- Calls for better long-term planning across the region and a clear rationale for investment at Falmouth.

### Community Engagement and Consultation Process

- Concerns that the design process lacked transparency or proper input from residents.
- Requests for true consultation, not forced choices, and frustration over lack of an option to reject all three proposed sites.

### Practical Suggestions and Additional Considerations

- Suggestions to integrate the toilet with walking and cycling routes, including signage and access pathways.
- Requests for additional infrastructure such as:
  - Rubbish bins and dog bag dispensers
  - Shower retention (for swimmers)
  - Barrier posts to protect coastal vegetation
- Caution raised about RV and campervan waste disposal misuse, asking for management plans to avoid issues seen at Lagoon's Beach.

## Conclusions:

Community feedback through the online survey on the proposed Falmouth toilet block reveals strong support for upgrading or rebuilding the facility at or near its existing location, citing the advantages of existing infrastructure, with a view that the environmental impacts created by required excavation work was not of concern to community, and its functional proximity to the beach. Many respondents felt that relocating the toilet to the Falmouth Community Centre or Reserve would create unnecessary impacts—particularly through the removal of well-established trees and the increased traffic near homes and children's play areas. The southern side of the bike track or an area west of the fire station were suggested as more suitable alternatives with lower environmental and social impacts.

There is a clear call for a simpler, smaller, and better-integrated toilet design that meets accessibility and family needs while being sympathetic to the local landscape. Many expressed concerns that the current concept design is overly large and visually intrusive. Residents also voiced dissatisfaction with the consultation process, emphasising the need for more transparent engagement, including the option to reject all proposed locations. Overall, the community seeks a balanced outcome that improves amenity without compromising the unique environmental and social character of Falmouth.

**Commented [J12]:** Reworded to make it clear they didn't seem to care about removing vegetation - very surprisingly given the objection to removal of 2 trees in the alternative location

**Commented [J13R2]:** Flowering gums

## Community Consultation Session

The community consultation session was held at the Falmouth Community Centre on 19 February from 5:30 – 7pm. The session was well attended by the community with approximately 35 people in attendance.

Commented [J14]: Check this number

The group predominantly represented long-term residents in the area over the age of 55.

### AIMS:

- To give those who did not want to take the survey or in addition to the survey, to share their views on the proposed toilet block locations.
- Use accepted consultation methods and activities to understand community sentiment.
- Listen and record any feedback on the project.

### METHOD:

After welcoming the community, Council's Development Services Coordinator, Jake Ihnen gave attendees a run down on the project and the three locations – outlining why they were selected and the benefits and challenges of each location.

Council Officers intended to run this session with prescribed and proved community consultation techniques, however, as the session unfolded, it became clear that attendees preferred a more open format, which resulted in the information being captured in a less structured, more ad-hoc manner. However, Council Officers are confident that the main themes, concerns and opportunities from the session were captured and are reflective of the findings in the online survey.

### KEY FEEDBACK:

The key themes for feedback from the community session were:

- Residents did not want to see any of the flowering gums removed – which was proposed with Option 1 – Falmouth Reserve.
- Proposed two new locations: Fire Station and on the existing site at Grant Street.
- Residents stated they were not as concerned about the removal of vegetation at the current site for the toilet if required at the Grant Street site.
- Residents were not happy with the design for the toilet block and requested that the design be more in keeping with the natural values of the area.
- The community expressed a desire to be able to review and provide feedback on any new designs
- The community would like Council to seriously consider the environmental impacts of the project regardless of which location it is placed at.



#### PREFERRED LOCATION:

At the meeting residents called for a show of hands to understand support for each location, this count does not form part of this report. Officers attempted to explain to attendees why we do not do this but unfortunately were not given the opportunity to explain – this method is not used as some people do not feel confident enough to share their thoughts in a public forum or will 'go with the flow' to avoid conflict. A number of residents approached us after the meeting to express this very sentiment to us.

To count support for locations, attendees were given a red dot which they were asked to place on the location they preferred. Based on the feedback from attendees regarding the two additional locations, we also added these to the three proposed locations, leaving five locations for attendees to select from.

Of the five locations displayed only the two alternative locations received interest with the final count being:

- Existing Location – 29
- Fire Station – 9

#### CLOSING:

In closing, Council Officers told attendees that we would take this feedback on board with all other feedback from the project and consider the two other locations put forward.

### OVERALL CONCLUSIONS – from Survey and Community Meeting

It is clear from the comprehensive and significant amount of response to the survey as well as the feedback heard at the community information session that:

1. The preferred location is Grant Street;
2. There is significant community support for replacing the toilet in its current position at Grant Street
3. The community would like to see another design for the toilet that they feel is in better keeping with the natural landscape and values of the area. Noting that a single unisex facility would suffice.
4. Residents did not want to see any of the flowering gums removed – which was proposed with Option 1 – Falmouth Reserve.
5. The community would like Council to consider the two, new proposed locations: At the Fire Station and on the existing site at Grant Street.
6. Residents stated they were not as concerned about the removal of vegetation at the current site for the toilet if required at the Grant Street site.
7. Residents were not happy with the design for the toilet block and requested that the design be more in keeping with the natural values of the area.
8. The community expressed a desire to be able to review and provide feedback on any new designs for the toilet block.
9. The community would like Council to seriously consider the environmental impacts of the project regardless of which location it is placed at.